

June 16th, 2015
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street with the following members present:

President Hepfer
Vice President Ryan
Councilwoman Bega
Councilman McBride
Councilman Hinkle
Mayor Plaisted

Also present were City Manager DiGiovanni, City Attorney Haag, Asst. City Manager Williams, Community Development Director Malm, Finance Director Chiodo, and City Clerk Davis.

The Invocation was given by Councilman McBride and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Council President asked Acceptance of Agenda be approved with the following changes: adding to City Manager's Report, Sunday's Opinion Article, and switching items 5 & 6 due to time.

Councilman Ryan motioned to accept the Agenda with the noted changes. Seconded by Councilman Hinkle. The motioned carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

4)1) Budget Transfer - Zephyr Street Project/Vietnam Event Fireworks Donation – Replenish Reserves/IIGC Building Exterior was addressed by Council President Hepfer. City Manager DiGiovanni explained this was necessary to recognize certain revenue that were not anticipated, such as donation to support Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans and Impact fees, and to move funds from Inverness Government Center Contingency Funds to an expenditure line in the support of exterior maintenance work. Unanticipated Revenue for Fireworks: \$4,500; Unanticipated Expense for IGC Contingencies: \$125,000; Unanticipated Use of Impact Fees County for Zephyr St Project: \$17,043; and Unanticipated use of Impact Fees City for Zephyr St. Project: \$20,200. These projects are getting ready to commence and this is to recognize these revenues and contingency funds going to the line items of budget, increasing the size of the budget.

Council President Hepfer opened the Public Hearing

There was no one speaking for or against the Amendments

The Public Hearing was closed.

Discussion: None

Councilwoman Bega motioned to read Resolution 2015-08 by title only. Seconded by Councilman Hinkle. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2015-08

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA AMENDING THE ADOPTED BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2014 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2015, AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND, CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, AND IMPACT FEE FUND REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilman Hinkle motioned to adopt Resolution 2015-08, by roll call vote. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilman Hinkle, yes; Councilman Ryan, yes; President Hepfer, yes. The motion carried unanimously.

SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

6)a) John Stewart and Barbara Mills - Vietnam Event appeared before Council, with John Stewart presenting Certificates for supporting the Vietnam Events in the City last month. He noted the City of the Most Patriotic and a city with a heart. He provided certificates to the Mayor and each council member, the City Manager and the Events Dept.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Charles Knecht, Sr. -2410 W. Spring Lake Dr., W. Spring Lake Homeowners Association spoke to the Fire District Tax, MSBU & MSTU's and would love Inverness to join the Fire Dept. with the County. He stated that it will cost Inverness over a million dollars to have their own fire service. He believes the best for Inverness would be to joins the MSBU creating one taxing mechanism in the future. He hasn't heard any complaints from anyone and wants the lowest taxes for all citizens. He spoke of the security he felt with the fire department and the Sheriff's office. \$3 million was spent on the Valerie Theatre, and that's what will be spent on a fire service department. Will need a ladder truck that could cost \$850,000 for a new ladder truck.

Jim Kupcho – Homosassa Springs questioned Council on the figures of the total of the projected cost to go on its own for fire services. City Manager stated there were figures in the agenda backup material with a figure of \$550,000 startup with an annual of about \$425,000-\$450,000. Mr. Kupcho asked for public access to a line item breakdown, including turnout gear, trucks, salaries, insurance, etc. There are unanswered questions.

Dennis Dix, executive Director of the Hernando–Citrus MPO, provided a brief update on Hwy 41 and Suncoast Parkway 2. He spoke of the public hearing to be held on June 25 in Lecanto. US 41 is important to both counties, and as it stands now the project would not be complete until 2040. Last week FDOT advised to move the project up 10 years. He is recommending the MPO consider funds from both counties. The MPO is making good progress, and noted how Councilman McBride has helped this out.

City Manager asked about the Ocala/Marion MPO and if there could be a possible cooperative effort regarding 41 N and US 200. Mr. Dix stated the connection with US

200 is the number two priority. Councilman McBride added that having an MPO with Hernando and Citrus has made a difference and Mr. Dix is taking a lead and efforts are blossoming for 41 N.

MAYOR'S LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

None

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Ryan motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilman Hinkle. The motion carried.

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 05/14/15WS; 06/04/15WS*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- c) Planning and Zoning Board Resignation- David Brooks*
 - Recommendation – Approval

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager DiGiovanni spoke to an opinion **article published in the Chronicle**. It is okay to disagree, but this article got into avenues of impaired judgment, integrity & bias which create a fatal flaw in leadership. This article spoke to impairment of this office, and if City Council has a shred of belief in what was published, he didn't need to be sitting here and a change would need to be made. For us to move forward, and if there is concern, we need to recognize it and go from there.

Mayor Plaisted stated he also read the article that suggests the truth will set you free and about filters people use, when actually it is perspective. He spoke to a few of the particulars within the article, including Citrus Memorial Hospital and Whispering Pines Park, and stated his support of the City Manager for his vision and betterment of our City for over 20 years.

Councilwoman Bega stated the newspapers job is to sell newspapers. Creating chaos does that for the newspaper.

Councilman Hinkle found the article offensive and thinks there needs to be an apology. We support our City Manager as he works toward benefits and vision for our City. It seems that the article has filters and bias.

Councilman Ryan reiterated the support for the City Manager, who has the vision to work towards the betterment of this community. He feels as though Gerry Mulligan owes the City and the Council an apology.

Councilman McBride cannot figure out the perspective of the Citrus County Chronicle. He does not believe one single time that the City Manager had made recommendation to Council that is not in the best interest of City.

Council President Hepfer looked at this article as another opinion. You see things through what you do and who you are, and didn't take it personally.

City Manager DiGiovanni stated that this was not about him, but about the community at large and we have to have confidence in each other, and Council has to have confidence in the person sitting in this chair. He appreciates their comments, it does bring clarity to something that was otherwise made cloudy.

10)a) ICRA Special Counsel Budget Transfer was addressed. City Manager DiGiovanni stated that this was to support the Inverness Redevelopment Agency use of special legal council. We had to go through difficult and lengthened process to expand the CRA, which generated additional special counsel needs. It is recommended that City Council support the transfer of \$45,000 from Council Contingencies to CRA Special Legal Fund Acct. to meet those obligations.

Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the transfer of \$45,000 from Council contingencies to CRA Special legal Counsel. Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motion carried unanimously.

10)b) ICRA Resolution by Council was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni explained that this was previously passed, however we wished to exercised an abundance of caution and recommend that Council move to reaffirm (re-adopt) the Resolution this evening.

Councilman Hinkle motioned to have City Clerk Davis read Resolution 2015-05 by title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-05

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; FINDING THE EXISTENCE OF BLIGHTED AREA CONDITIONS WITHIN THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS; FINDING A NEED FOR EXPANDING THE EXISTING COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 163, PART III, FLORIDA STATUTES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilman Ryan motioned to adopt Resolution 2015-05, by roll call vote. Seconded by Councilman Hinkle. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilman Hinkle, yes; Councilman Ryan, yes; President Hepfer, yes. The motion carried unanimously.

10)c) FDOT Grant Application was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who explained the Department of Transportation, Highway Safety Improvement Grant Program. We recently learned of this program, and have taken preliminary action on the City's behalf, to seek funds to support what is listed in the agenda memorandum, such as: S. Apopka Ave vehicular safety improvements; Forest Dr. Pedestrian and Vehicular safety improvements; Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. street and pedestrian safety enhancements; Vine St. Sidewalk replacement; Solar Crosswalk – Mossy Oak & Trail and Vine & Apopka; (2) Portable Reader Units; Sign Post Reflectors (500). It is

recommended that Council support the application for us to seek these funds for this equipment.

Councilman Hinkle motion to authorize that we continue with the application process to secure grant funds from DOT to improve local roadway safety. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried unanimously.

City Manager made a footnote that if these projects come to fruition, these items would be made part of the 2015/2016 ensuing budget.

*Footnote (Dennis Dix spoke (6:18) listed under Open Public Hearing)

10)d) Fire Services regarding the 1974 Tax District, general fund impacts, budget, fees, etc. was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni. In addressing some of the Council's questions, he spoke to the total tax levied by the County from the City and how it relates to the 1974 Fire Tax. The dollars consumed by public safety can climb upwards to \$2.8 million. The direct contribution from the City is around \$750,000 into the Sheriff's Department, which includes the law enforcement agreement.

Moving forward with fire services, the high cost of collecting taxes by the Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections offices was questioned. Could not find support of the fee amount of \$50,000 but more like \$10,000 and wanted to point out that amount of cost would not necessarily negatively affect any collections. The current levy adopted by the 1974 tax would bring in approx. \$300,000. The startup costs for a fire services unit, being a blended approach with paid staff and volunteers, could be approx. \$600,000. This information comes from the expertise of the Dunnellon Fire Department.

The CIP allocated some \$250,000 of capitalized funding to get us going, which could be modified as we move forward. What is being discussed is a cooperative and offsetting cost in working with the City of Dunnellon. Due to the initial dialogue, the City of Crystal River would be more involved from the standpoint of volunteer recruitment, etc. If the numbers hold, we are looking at the city budget coming up with roughly \$25,000 budgetary impact. In summation, if Council decides to proceed with the development of fire services unit or another decision is made, a matrix of what needs to happen & when it should be done will be presented at the next Council meeting. Don't know if Council is committed to a decision this evening, however we are building a budget and need knowledge of service scope. This is a policy decision and needs to be kept in the forefront, we will make it work no matter what the decision.

Councilman Ryan knows that much thought has gone into this subject and has a folder full of letter and articles re; for and against MSBU. We need to look to the future and establishment of the City's own fire dept.

Councilman McBride stated City Manager distilled three option 1) create own fire department, 2) endorse MSBU, or 3) direct City staff to meet with County Staff to develop a Fire Services Agreement based on the Sheriff's Office managing the program at a cost consistent with the rest of Citrus County. He does not favor the MSBU, nor

developing our own fire department at this point. He believes City staff could develop a Fire Services Agreement to have a level of service consistent with what our needs are. Noted letter dated September 18, 2014 from Sheriff Dawsy with a proposal of two firefighters, 24 hours a day along with accompanying capital. Offer put on table for \$500,000, and we are talking about \$450,000 to operate our own fire Department on an annual basis. Does not see the \$50,000 difference turning the tables for us. He recommends City Manager engage with County staff to develop an agreement.

Councilwoman Bega is in a quandary when listening to Dunnellon as it seems very feasible. It would relieve the impact and stress on the City employees not to have to manage and run it ourselves. Thinks we should look at an agreement with county at this point.

Councilman Hinkle does not want the MSBU, and likes the idea of our own Fire Dept. and is in favor of blended department.

Council President Hepfer is not ready at this point as we have so much going on and would be happy to go along with an agreement v.s going our own way, and are not ready to go out on our own yet.

Mayor Plaisted stated that he has given a lot of thought to this and seriously believes we should control our future, and in doing so work with cost, and when we don't we're at the whim of others. Feels we should have our own Fire Dept. and spoke to payments per call, etc.

Councilman McBride motioned that we direct the city staff to meet with county staff to develop a Fire Services Agreement based on the Sheriff's Office managing the program at a cost consistent with the rest of Citrus County and that is said in the context of the Sheriff's September 18th, 2014 letter to the City Manager. Seconded by Council President Hepfer. Motion carried. (3 in favor; 2 opposed)

10)e) Valerie 501- C3 was addressed with regard to the Valerie Theatre Cultural Center by City Manager DiGiovanni, who explained the complexities of this project which should be finalized within the next six-week period. Much work has been taken to provide a solid foundation to operate the Theatre. Non-profit status has been determined important and steps were taken to make that happen. He explained the advantages of a 501c3 Designation such as: Tax breaks, Operate and Marketing of the building and getting donors; donors able to enjoy tax reduction; Advantage to non for profit; and it gives credible approach to what can happen with the Cultural Center.

A non-profit status requires a board to be in place, which will work with Valerie Staff to promote what is taking place and help garner support from the community and beyond. All details have not yet been developed or worked through, and the work to create a dynamic program will begin in earnest. **No action is required.**

Alan Forino was introduced as the new director of the Valerie Theatre Cultural Center, and spoke to his great background, college, etc. We are very fortunate to have found him.

10)f) FLC Voting Delegate Selection – 89th Annual FLC Conference was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who referenced attached agenda information by the Florida League of City for the upcoming Statewide City Conference. Council is asked to select

one to serve as the representative voting delegate for Inverness at this year's League Conference. The selected party will be required to attend business meetings, participate in discussion and vote the interests of our City.

Council President Hepfer motioned to appoint Councilman Ryan the authorized voting delegate for Inverness at the 2015 FLC Conference. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motioned carried unanimously.

10)g) SWFWD Office Relocation Correspondence was addressed by City Manager who referenced letter received from the Brooksville Office for the Southwest Florida Water Management District, who may close and relocate to Tampa. He noted that this is being publicly presented for Council's consideration to determine if they wished to submit correspondence to comment on the pending move. Council consensus was to have staff compose send a letter of objection to the move.

City Attorney Haag noted the money invested in the offices in Brooksville that was discussed in the last meeting of the W RPC. Seems like a colossal waste of taxpayer's money. The farther away from us the less we will have their ear and the decision-making.

10)h) County Land Transfer to City was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni, who advised that paperwork for this item bypassed our office and was went directly to the attention of City Attorney Haag. This is being presented for Council's deliberation. The matter is of policy and not legality. He spoke to the former Amerigas site and property the city owns at the airport, and how the County seeks to secure ownership of the airport property to construct a road for the Fix Based Airport Operator. He spoke to the delay in moving forward of the business park, which will require zoning changed, etc. The issue is whether City Council desires to accept the land transfer from the County with the understanding that with that acceptance, they expect you to transfer the ownership of city property located at the airport.

City Attorney Haag referenced the recent correspondence he received in late April. He understood no decision was made and there had been disagreements regarding the land. The recommendation is for Council to have him forward the deed he received back to the County. He noted the Board of County Commissioners is not the same board that signed the deed. He didn't know the document even existed until he received it from County Administrator Randy Oliver. City Attorney Haag addressed the Charter and the need to consolidating all property issues in one place in a charter amendment.

Councilman McBride spoke to the 9-point plan that was offered to the County. His problem is if we are going to deal with one item here and one there, we will be in limbo, especially regarding Whispering Pines Park. He doesn't want to see an RV park replace baseball fields, and we need forward movement with WPP.

Councilman Hinkle motioned to return AmeriGas documents to County pending an agreement among the parties. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. Motion carried unanimously.

City Manager DiGiovanni invited **Alan Forino** to address Council. Mr. Forino thanked Council for the opportunity to be part of this. He's excited about the Valerie Theatre and loves this community.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Councilman McBride spoke to the Flag Day Ceremony and the keynote speech by John Stewart. Looks forward to July 3rd fireworks.

Councilman Ryan referenced the discussion on Fire Services and that the decision didn't come easy. Spoke to Ethics Workshop he attended, and that ethics should not be taken lightly.

Mayor Plaisted stated it's been honor since 1999 to serve with members of this Council. He spoke to the leadership and integrity of the County Manager and staff.

Councilwoman Bega stated what could be more humbling than to receive the certificate from the Vietnam Vets.

Councilman Hinkle spoke of the privilege to serve the City and how we move forward with decisions that are made. He thanked Barbara Mills for her efforts with the veterans.

Council President Hepfer spoke of how the Council works together because the goal is the betterment of the city.


CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

None

Meeting adjourned at **7:17pm.**



City Clerk



Council President